

# Arts-Rich Schools: Reflection and Audit Tool

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## **Arts-Rich Schools: Reflection and Audit Tool**

*A whole school instrument for evaluating arts-richness.*

This reflection and audit tool enables schools to assess their arts provision across 10 key dimensions. These dimensions reflect the practices found in schools that offer strong, equitable, and embedded arts provision.

### **How to Use This Tool**

The tool is designed to support professional reflection and shared discussion, not to judge or rank schools. It works best when used collaboratively and thoughtfully, drawing on the experience and perspectives of staff and students.

#### **1. Who should complete it?**

Senior leaders, arts coordinators, class teachers, support staff, and – where appropriate – students or governors. Completing the tool together encourages shared understanding and collective ownership of arts provision.

#### **2. How often?**

Ideally once per year as part of curriculum review, school improvement planning, or professional development. Schools may also choose to revisit specific sections during the year.

#### **3. How to approach each section**

Each section begins with a guiding question. Before scoring, take time to discuss this question together. Use it to frame your thinking about what is currently in place, whose experiences are reflected, and where there may be opportunities for development.

#### **4. How to score?**

For each dimension, agree a score based on collective discussion:

**1 = Emerging | 2 = Developing | 3 = Established | 4 = Embedded & Sustained**

Try to reach consensus, recognising that different perspectives can reveal important insights.

#### **5. Using the Evidence / Notes section**

When completing the Evidence / Notes section, focus on evidence that helps you answer the guiding question for that dimension. This might include examples from curriculum planning, student voice, lesson observations, participation data, displays, or partnerships.

#### **6. Using the Results**

Scores are intended to prompt conversation, not comparison. Use them to:

- Identify strengths to celebrate
- Highlight priority areas for development
- Inform action planning and next steps
- Support discussions with leadership, governors, or partners

This tool is most powerful when used as a starting point for dialogue and improvement, helping schools reflect on where they are now and where they would like to go next on their arts rich journey.

**SECTION 1: Provision & Curriculum**

This section explores the range and quality of arts opportunities available to students. It focuses on what is taught, how often arts learning takes place, and whether provision is planned, progressive, and meaningful rather than occasional or tokenistic.

**1. Breadth and Quality of Arts Provision**

*Guiding question: What arts experiences do students receive regularly and reliably?*

Indicators:

- Weekly teaching across music, drama, dance, and visual arts.
- Clear curriculum progression and high-quality resources.
- Regular opportunities for students to encounter arts beyond lessons (performances, exhibitions, clubs).

**Rating:**    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**2. Equity of Access & Participation**

*Guiding question: Who participates in the arts, and who may still face barriers?*

Indicators:

- All students have equal access irrespective of background, heritage, or income.
- Participation is monitored and targeted interventions reduce inequalities.
- Barriers such as cost, confidence, or timing are actively addressed.

**Rating:**    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**SECTION 2: Leadership, Staffing & Partnerships**

This section looks at the conditions that make arts rich practice possible. It examines leadership commitment, staff expertise, and how partnerships with cultural organisations support sustainable, high quality arts provision across the school.

**3. Leadership Commitment & Ethos**

*Guiding question: How visibly and consistently are the arts prioritised at leadership level?*

Indicators:

- Arts hold high status in the school's vision and improvement planning.
- Leaders advocate for arts based approaches across the curriculum.
- Time, space, and staffing reflect this commitment.

Rating:    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**4. Specialist Expertise & Professional Development**

*Guiding question: How confident and supported are staff delivering arts learning?*

Indicators:

- School employs or partners with specialist arts teachers/practitioners.
- CPD in arts pedagogy is routine and purposeful.
- Skill audits identify staff strengths and development pathways.

Rating:    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**SECTION 2: Leadership, Staffing & Partnerships**

continued

**5. Partnerships & Community Engagement**

*Guiding question: How do external relationships extend and enrich arts learning?*

Indicators:

- Sustained partnerships with arts organisations, cultural institutions, and artists.
- Regular workshops, visits, and shared performance/exhibition opportunities.
- Students' work is showcased publicly or within the community.

**Rating:**    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**SECTION 3: Teaching, Learning & Environment**

This section considers how the arts are experienced day to day. It focuses on teaching approaches, curriculum integration, physical spaces, and resources that enable students to engage creatively and confidently.

**6. Integration of Arts Across the Curriculum**

*Guiding question: How are the arts used to deepen learning beyond arts lessons?*

Indicators:

- Arts integrated into teaching across subjects, supporting engagement and achievement.
- Teachers use drama, movement, visual expression, or music to support core knowledge.
- Arts feature prominently in themes, inquiry topics, or interdisciplinary units.

Rating:    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**7. Learning Environment & Resources**

*Guiding question: How well do spaces and resources enable creative learning?*

Indicators:

- Dedicated arts spaces (e.g., art rooms, music studios, performance areas).
- High-quality, accessible instruments, materials, and equipment.
- Displays and school spaces celebrate creativity and student voice.

Rating:    1       2       3       4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**SECTION 4: Student Experience & Creative Identity**

This section helps schools reflect on students' lived experiences of the arts. Arts rich schools foster environments where students feel confident, included, and able to see themselves as creative individuals with a voice and a role in shaping arts provision.

**8. Student Voice: Participation, Ownership & Representation**

*Guiding question: Whose voices shape arts provision, and how are they heard?*

Indicators:

- Students can explain what the arts mean to them and how creative work contributes to their learning.
- All students feel included, valued, and able to participate fully in arts activities regardless of background.
- Regular opportunities exist to gather student feedback, which informs arts planning and provision.

**Rating:**    1        2        3        4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**9. Student Enjoyment, Confidence & Wellbeing**

*Guiding question: How do students feel about the arts, and what impact does this have?*

Indicators:

- Students show enjoyment and positive emotional engagement in arts lessons and activities.
- Children demonstrate confidence in sharing creative work and taking artistic risks.
- Students report that arts participation supports their wellbeing, sense of belonging, or motivation.

**Rating:**    1        2        3        4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

**SECTION 4: Student Experience & Creative Identity**

continued

**10. Student Leadership in the Arts**

*Guiding question: In what ways do students lead, influence, or co-create arts activity?*

Indicators:

- Students have opportunities to take purposeful leadership roles (e.g., Arts Ambassadors or project leaders).
- Children contribute meaningfully to planning or shaping arts events, showcases, or activities.
- Student leadership is diverse and representative, reflecting the voices of all groups.

**Rating:**    1        2        3        4

Evidence/Notes:

*Reflective prompt: What evidence helps us answer the guiding question above?*

### Scoring Table

Scores are indicative, not judgements. Use them to support conversation and planning, not comparison.

Your score:

Total score	Indicative Art-Richness Level	Interpretation
10–17	Emerging	Arts provision exists but is limited, inconsistent, or dependent on individuals
18–25	Developing	Clear commitment and growing consistency; key foundations in place
26–33	Established	High-quality, well-integrated provision with strong student experience
34–40	Embedded & Sustained	Arts fully embedded; students are co-creators and arts shape school culture

### Action Planning

Strengths Identified:

Areas Requiring Development:

**Student Voice Focus**

What students are telling us about their arts experiences:

What changes students would like to see:

How we will respond:

**Priority Actions for the Next 12 Months:**

**Resources or Support Needed:**

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